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vich, Governor

Environmental Protection Agency
Douglas P. Scott, Director

Environmental Justice

Promoting Public Health and Protecting the Environment for All Citizens

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PROMOTE AND PROTECT

Environmental Justice, often referred to as "EJ," is based on the principle that all citizens of Illinois should be protected from environmental pollution and have the right to a clean and healthy environment, regardless of their race or income level.

The Illinois EPA supports this principle by ensuring equity in the administration of the state's environmental programs, with adequate opportunities for meaningful public involvement in developing, implementing, and enforcing environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

To support this goal, the Illinois EPA created an EJ Officer position and formed an EJ Advisory Group that helped the Agency adopt a number of EJ policies, including an EJ public participation policy, internal procedures for responding to EJ concerns and complaints, and an EJ grievance procedure.

EJ GOALS

- Ensure that communities receive an equitable share of environmental protection and benefits
- Strengthen the public's involvement in environmental decision-making
- Ensure that Illinois EPA personnel use a common approach to addressing EJ issues
- Ensure that the Illinois EPA continues to refine its EJ strategy to respond to the communities it serves

EJ ADVISORY GROUP

The Illinois EJ Advisory Group consists of representatives from EJ groups, environmental groups, industry, academia, government, community-based organizations, and trade associations. The Advisory Group has provided recommendations on EJ policies and procedures adopted by the Agency, assisted with strategies to better communicate with residents in areas with potential EJ concerns, and made suggestions on how to implement Agency programs to ensure environmental justice.

ROLE OF THE EJ OFFICER

The Illinois EPA EJ Officer serves as a liaison between citizens and communities, and Agency staff. The EJ Officer coordinates and facilitates EJ activities on behalf of the Illinois EPA, with the advice of the EJ Advisory Group.

If you believe that you or your community has received unfair treatment due to the Agency's development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies, please contact the EJ Officer at 217-524-1284.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Illinois EPA has developed and implemented a public participation policy that calls for enhanced community outreach when significant permitting decisions and

environmental cleanup activities are planned in areas with potential EJ concerns. Outreach activities may include community meetings, formal public hearings, distribution of fact sheets, and more.

Interested individuals and groups may sign up for a mailing list to receive notices of hearings on regulations, permit applications, and other significant Agency actions that may impact their communities, by contacting the Office of Community Relations at 217-782-5562, or the Agency's toll-free Environmental Helpline at 1-888-372-1996.

U.S. EPA EJ GRANT PROGRAMS

U.S. EPA's EJ Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreement Program provides financial assistance to eligible organizations working on, or planning to work on, projects to address local environmental and/or public health issues in their communities, using its "Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Model."

The EJ Small Grants Program provides financial assistance to eligible organizations to build collaborative partnerships, to identify the local environmental and public health issues, and to envision solutions and empower the community through education, training, and outreach.

To find out about other potential grants that could be used to address environmental justice issues, contact the U.S. EPA Region 5 EJ Regional Coordinator at 312-353-8894.

EJ AdvisoryGroup

Blacks In Green (BIG)
NAACP Illinois Conference of Branches
Sierra Club
Illinois Energy Association
Institute for Environmental Science & Policy
Southeast Environmental Task Force
American Bottom Conservancy
Village of Robbins
Committee for Economic Recovery
Chicago Legal Clinic
Illinois Environmental Regulatory Group
University of Illinois at Springfield
Chemical Industry Council of Illinois
Illinois Municipal League
American Council of Engineering Companies of Illinois
Little Village EJ Organization
People for Community Recovery
Freeport Citizens EJ Group
Pilsen Environmental Rights and Reform Organization
Kerr McGee
U.S. EPA
Illinois Environmental Council
Chicago Department of Environment
Chicago Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC)
Illinois EPA

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3 0112 075774163

Contact Information

Illinois EPA EJ Officer
217-524-1284
ken.page@illinois.gov

http://www.epa.state.il.us/environmental-justice/

Office of Community Relations
217-782-5562

Toll-Free Environmental Helpline
888-372-1996

U.S. EPA Region 5 EJ Coordinator
312-353-8894
walts.alan@epa.gov

http://www.epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice/

National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC)

http://www.epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice/nejac/index.html

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